

Message Text

SECRET

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61

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 COME-00

EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 AID-20 NIC-01 RSR-01 OPR-02 /131 W

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P R 222341Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5267

INFO DOD/DIA

USCINCSO

S E C R E T SANTIAGO 3743

E.O. 11652: XGDS 3

TAGS: CI, PINT, PINS, MILI

SUBJ: RUIZ'S FOUR DAYS

1. WE HAVE REPORTED EVENTS IN CHILEAN POLITICAL AND MILITARY CIRCLES BEGINNING WITH GEN CESAR RUIZ' RESIGNATION AS MINPUBLIC WORKS AUG 18 AND ENDING WITH INSTALLATION OF GEN GUSTAVO LEIGH AS AIR FORCE CINC 1900 HOURS AUG 20. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO PULL TOGETHER WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THAT BACKGROUND AND MANEUVERING SURROUNDING THEM.

2. AS FOR RUIZ' RESIGNATION AS MINPUBLICWORKS, HE UNDOUBTEDLY FELT HE WAS BEING UNDERCUT BY SUCH NOMINAL SUBORDINATES AS UNDERSEC TRANSPORTATION JAIME FAIVOVICH IN HIS SEARCH FOR A SOLUTION TO TRUCKERS STRIKE, AND HE PROBABLY ALSO CORRECTLY BELIEVED THAT HE HAD BEEN GRANTED INSUFFICIENT AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE SETTLEMENT. WHAT IS CLEAR IS THAT RUIZ, AS HE HIMSELF SAID PUBLICLY ON AUG 19 TV SHOW, HAD NO INTENTION OF RESIGNING AS FACH CINC. HIS EXPLANATION IS CREDIBLE THAT HIS ORIGINAL RESIGNATION LETTER AS MINISTER CONTAINED NO REFERENCE TO FACH AND THAT A NEW PARAGRAPH "IMPLICITLY"RESIGNING AS FACH COMMANDER WAS ADDED ONLY AT ALLENDE'S INSISTENCE, ON THE BASIS THAT CINCS MUST SUPPORT HIM BY HOLDING CABINET POSTS.

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3. ON AUG 18, AIR FORCE UNITS REACTED STRONGLY TO NEWS OF RUIZ'

RESIGNATION. FACH GENERALS APPARENTLY VOWED TO SUBMIT RESIGNATIONS EN MASSE IF NEEDED, AND A UNIFIED SERVICE WAS PSYCHOLOGICALLY READY TO MOVE. IT IS LIKELY THAT AT THAT POINT NAVY WOULD HAVE JOINED IN, RUIZ HELD BACK.

4. WITH INSTALLATION OF GEN MAGLIOCCHETTI, NOT A CINC, AS PUBLIC WORKS MINISTER, RUIZ BEGAN TO HAVE SECOND THOUGHTS. ON HIS TV APPEARANCE, RUIZ IMPLIED HE HAD BEEN TRICKED INTO RESIGNING AS FACH CINC, AND BY AUG 20 RUIZ WAS APPARENTLY READY TO MAKE HIS MOVE. BY THEN IT WAS TOO LATE. HIS AMBIGUOUS TV PERFORMANCE, COUPLED WITH HIS INDECISION ON ALLOWING HIMSELF TO BE PRESSURED INTO TAKING A CABINET POST AND HIS FAILURE TO PREVENT RETIREMENTS OF GENERALS STUARDO AND RODRIGUEZ, HAD RAISED DOUBTS AMONG SOME KEY FACH COMMANDERS AND NAVY LEADERS. RUIZ CONSULTED FACH PERSONNEL AT EL BOSQUE AND LOS CERRILLOS AUG 20, BUT DEMURRED WHEN APPRISED OF DOUBTS WITHIN FACH AND NAVY. THE TRANSFER OF COMMAND CEREMONY THEN TOOK PLACE.

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